



Marines during
grain lift in Somalia,
Restore Hope.

Interagency Cooperation

PDD 56 and Complex Contingency Operations

DOD (D.W. Mobley)

By WILLIAM P. HAMBLET and JERRY G. KLINE

Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 56, "Managing Complex Contingency Operations," mandates reform in the joint/interagency coordination process. It recognizes that the United States will continue to conduct complex contingency operations (CCOs). Greater coordination is required to appropriately bring all instruments of national power to bear on all such operations.

Those who have served in these operations can attest to the friction and failure caused by poor planning and the lack of interagency coordination. Although PDD 56 takes a significant step toward incorporating planning mechanisms to achieve unity of effort, the program is in its infancy and in some aspects falls short of the President's intent.

Mandates, Directives, and Doctrine

Following the Cold War the internal collapse of weak nations often unleashed destabilizing forces with the potential to spread to neighboring states. Refugee movements, ethnic and

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political unrest, organized crime, and other crises (disease, famine, and human rights abuses) occurred with such an intensity and frequency that the United States was unprepared to handle them. As a result, America has developed a different approach.¹ President Clinton directed an interagency review of peacekeeping policies, programs, and procedures to establish a comprehensive policy framework to address post-Cold War realities. Completed in 1994, the review led to the issuance of PDD 25 on the reform of multilateral peace operations.

PDD 25 established instructions for peace operations and focused attention on the need for improved dialog and decisionmaking among governmental agencies. It laid the basis for PDD 56, which institutionalized policies and procedures on managing complex crises. The former directive became the President's master strategy for dealing with internal strife in so-called failed states.

While PDD 25 articulated a policy on integrating operations, joint doctrine provided limited guidance. Joint Pub 1, *Joint Warfare of the U.S. Armed Forces*, cited interagency coordination as part of team warfare. However, Joint Pub 3-0, *Joint Operations*, and Joint Pub 3-07, *Military Operations Other Than War*, did not convey a strong message on unity and failed to provide guidance to commanders. Until 1996, only Joint Pub 3-07.4, *Joint Counterdrug Operations*, contained useful information on interagency planning and operations.

Lack of guidance led to Joint Pub 3-08, *Interagency Coordination During Joint Operations*. First published in 1996, it discusses interagency processes and players, the evolving role of the Armed Forces, and the functions of the National Security Council system. It also outlines both principles for organizing interagency efforts on the operational level and roles and responsibilities for JTFs. The publication contained guidance for coordination between CINCs and agencies as well as methodologies for interagency operations.

Although publication of joint doctrine was a welcome addition, it was not enough. Joint manuals did not adequately explain methods for interagency planning, coordination, and execution.

Camp Hope in Fier, Albania, during Sustain Hope.



1st Combat Camera Squadron (Chris Steffen)

Thus DOD and other agencies identified a need for policy guidance such as that found in PDD 56.

Criticisms, Challenges, and Choices

Problems have existed on all levels of interagency coordination from the strategic to the tactical, but the strategic and operational levels must be immediately improved for success in future CCOs. Civilian agencies lack sufficient authority and accountability to execute humanitarian and nation-assistance tasks. They have the luxury of picking some and discarding others. Although U.S. customs officials participated in sanctions against Bosnia, they declined to take part in similar actions against Iraq and Serbia.² Such ad hoc responses make it hard for CINCs to predict which requirements the military must meet.

Another shortfall is that most civilian organizations do not maintain large staffs and are not equipped to conduct expeditionary operations. In Somalia, neither the Department of State nor the U.S. Agency for International Development had sufficient personnel in the region. For example, while Ambassador Robert Oakley and his staff remained fully engaged working with the military in Somalia, there were not enough civilian personnel to negotiate with the various factions or to assist local village elders in establishing councils and security forces. Army civil affairs teams had to assume those responsibilities.

In addition to insufficient authority, accountability, and staffing, many civilian agencies do not have standard operating procedures or the doctrine to guide efforts on the operational level.



C-17 arriving in Tirana for Sustain Hope.

PDD 56 was born in 1997, the result of such undertakings as Restore Hope and Support Hope

As a result, responses are often slow and ad hoc, making it difficult to conduct military planning. In Rwanda, for instance, some agencies could not decide what to contribute, so U.S. European

Command planners were hard pressed to determine what military resources were required.

A final operational consideration involves the unique position of

CINCs in the interagency process since their interaction tends to be vertical versus lateral. They do not have civilian agency counterparts. The Department of State has regional assistant secretaries, but they are not deployed or responsible for operations on the ground. Meanwhile ambassadors, who reside in the area and are responsible for field level operations, are assigned to specific

countries and are not equipped to coordinate regional efforts. Because most emergencies transcend national boundaries, the absence of a compatible operational framework between officials of the Department of State and the CINCs is a problem. By default unified commanders are the only officials who can provide leadership on behalf of the Nation even while operating in a supporting role to civilian agencies. Complications arise between the Department of State (with its country teams) and the Department of Defense (with its regional commands). Planning and conducting operations and identifying counterparts across agencies further frustrates cohesive regional efforts. These problems demonstrated the need for an overarching policy to guide all facets of operations. Thus PDD 56 was born in 1997, the

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55th Signal Company (Christina Ann Horne)

**Distributing relief aid
in Kosovo, Joint
Guardian.**

result of such undertakings as Restore Hope and Support Hope.

The directive applies to situations that require multidimensional operations with diplomatic, humanitarian, intelligence, economic development, and security components. According to it:

The PDD defines CCOs as peace operations such as the Dayton Peace accord implementation operations in Bosnia [1995-present] . . . and foreign humanitarian assistance operations [in central Africa and Bangladesh]. Unless otherwise directed PDD 56 does not apply to domestic disaster relief or to relatively routine or small-scale operations, nor to military operations conducted in defense of U.S. citizens, territory, or property, including counterterrorism, hostage rescue operations, and international armed conflict.

The directive thus does not apply to combat operations.

The interagency structure for handling such operations is led by the Deputies Committee. The group consists of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy or his principal deputy, the Vice Chairman, the Under or Assistant Secretary of State for Political Affairs, and the Deputy National Security Advisor, with participation from other departments as needed. When a crisis arises, that body takes the lead and sets an interagency effort in motion to plan and manage a CCO.

Operating under the Deputies Committee is the Executive Committee (ExComm), led by the assistant or deputy assistant secretaries of the various departments and the Director or Vice Director of the Joint Staff. ExComm is responsible for

day-to-day implementation of the PDD 56 process and oversees the workings of the interagency working group.

The Deputies Committee requires a political-military plan in order to react to a contingency. It is developed by the working group using the generic political-military scheme as a template. It covers at a minimum: situation assessment, national interests, mission statement, objectives, concept of operations and organization, desired endstate, preparatory tasks, transition/exit strategy, functional or mission area tasks/agency plans, and lead agency responsibilities.

The second area, identifying national interests and stating a purpose and mission, is critical to the plan. The mission statement must yield achievable and measurable criteria, including an exit vision or transition strategy.

A major feature of the PDD 56 process is rehearsing before implementing. The Deputies Committee conducts the rehearsal by going through the plan in time sequence to ensure that every element follows logically. Representatives from every government department involved participate to explain their role and address any problems that arise.

After the decision to conduct the operation is reached, comprehensive after action reviews are needed during and after the implementation phase. The military is familiar with after action reports and lessons learned. PDD 56 captures lessons in reviews of interagency performance both in the field and in Washington, as well as legal and budgetary problems and agency execution. The focus is on developing solutions so future operations do not repeat the same mistakes.

A key mechanism of PDD 56 is inculcating interagency cooperation into leaders at every government agency. In training, the directive aims to create "a cadre of professionals familiar with this integrated planning process . . . to manage future operations."

A number of institutions, including the National Foreign Affairs Training Center, National Defense University, and service colleges, are developing interagency training. As a former foreign service officer has argued, success in military operations other than war calls for "greater than ever cooperation between civilian and military operators."³ Exposing leaders to the doctrine, attitudes, and capabilities of other agencies in an academic setting can build trust and cooperation. Military education has emphasized interagency coordination and developed a CCO exercise that includes role players from other agencies, non-governmental organizations, and host nations.

Humanitarian relief exercise aboard *USS Coronado*.



U.S. Navy Reserve (Peter Jones)

Outcomes and Agendas

Although it may be too early to evaluate the impact of PDD 56, its approach has promise and includes primary elements (such as the political-military plan, joint training, rehearsals, and Ex-Comm) that have proven successful in earlier operations.

For example, in Haiti and to a lesser extent during United Task Force in Somalia, processes contained in the PDD 56 framework had positive results. Policies and procedures outlined in the directive have met the principal objective of enhancing the effectiveness of interagency coordination and management of CCOs. However, despite improving coordination the directive has its weaknesses.

As in any new initiative, PDD 56 needs leadership. Though endorsed by the President, not all civilian and military leaders have bought into the process.⁴ Key officials in agencies such as the Departments of State and Justice must embrace its concepts and ensure that the right people are trained. Military leaders must adjust their cultural mindsets as well.

Lieutenant General Martin Steele, USMC, explained that "a generational shift must occur with interagency training and education."⁵ Military leaders from the Chairman and CINCs down

must support education and training efforts so that everyone is familiar with interagency processes and ground level procedures to implement PDD 56 concepts. CINCs, with their unique capacity to pull together regional activities, must provide leadership even in a supporting role. They can assist by fostering cultural changes required by the directive. By stepping outside traditional stovepipes, they can help subordinate commanders capitalize on all national capabilities by integrating civilian and military efforts in contingencies. Achieving unity of effort will not be easy, especially during the transitional phase of an operation. As David Bowker explains:

PDD 56 underemphasizes transitional periods and fails to provide an adequate framework for their management. The pol-mil plan presents minimal guidance on how to handle transitions, while the PDD neglects to explain managing an operation as it moves from peacekeeping to peace building. A more compelling question with respect to transitions and long-term issues not addressed in the PDD is how will the ExComm operate in the peace building phase and how can regional specialists play a greater facilitation role?⁶

There are no institutional mechanisms for integrating regional specialists into a developing

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operation, even though they will be asked to chair the interagency ExComm in the latter stages of peace building. For example, as CCOs move into the peace building phase, functional chairmen must hand off to regional specialists. According to Bowker, "PDD 56 fails to address the civil-military relationship in clear terms. No mention is made to limit military involvement in traditional civilian tasks. Similarly, the directive overemphasizes the military role and downplays the civilian part in the latter stages of peacekeeping and peace building."⁷ Often an operation loses continuity because no formal process facilitates such a transfer of leadership.

Although some consider it as the most important phase, PDD 56 misses an opportunity to provide guidance for crisis recovery (peace building), which requires a coordinated effort across a range of issues including funding, logistics, political will, commitment of time, and understanding host nation customs, laws, and culture. Part of crisis recovery may include providing food, water, shelter, medical care, housing for refugees, and utility/infrastructure repairs. Unless such tasks are coordinated, a region could be thrown back into crisis.

Operation Allied Force in Serbia and neighboring states provides a compelling argument for expanding PDD 56 to include combat operations. Since the end of the Cold War most CCOs have had the potential to erupt in violence. In Somalia, better interagency coordination might have prevented mission creep and combat operations against General Aideed. In Haiti, a combat operation turned into a peaceful intervention at the eleventh hour. In Kosovo, when diplomacy failed to create a solution, NATO resorted to force. PDD 56 should be expanded to govern interagency coordination for combat as well as peace operations. No civilian agency has the right to put its stamp of approval on campaign plans developed by CINCS once a decision has been made to use force. However, every combat operation will require interagency coordination. For example, refugees and displaced persons have an impact on other nations in any given region while information operations affect the overall effort, not just military considerations. The need to include combat operations is especially salient when allowing for the fuzzy lines that separate peace and combat operations in today's world.

The following recommendations are intended to overcome the barriers which are preventing governmental agencies from implementing this directive:

- integrate the PDD 56 process into service colleges and other agency training curricula
- provide presidential-directed funding for interagency training and exercises
- increase leadership support from senior civilian and military officials
- expand the scope of the directive to include combat as well as peace operations.

PDD 56 is vital in dealing with complex contingency operations. Although not fully tested, it incorporates proven integrated planning mechanisms that have enhanced interagency efforts. The next administration should maintain the momentum of these efforts by embracing the suggestions discussed above. Perhaps Congress will establish a continuing requirement which calls on every agency of government to adopt the reforms that are contained in this directive. One can only trust that progress made to date will not be swept away.

JFQ

NOTES

¹ David W. Bowker, "The New Management of Peace Operations under PDD 56," *The Fletcher Forum*, vol. 22, no. 2 (Summer/Fall 1998), p. 58.

² Jennifer M. Taw, *Interagency Coordination in Military Operations Other Than War* (Santa Monica, Calif.: The RAND Corporation, 1997), p. 8.

³ Mark Lore, "War College Needs More Diplomas," *Government Executive*, vol. 30, no. 5 (May 1998), pp. 64-65.

⁴ William A. Mendel and David G. Bradford, *Interagency Cooperation: A Regional Model for Overseas Operations*, McNair Paper no. 44 (Washington: National Defense University, 1995), p. 87.

⁵ Martin R. Steele, "Deep Coalitions and Interagency Task Forces," *Naval War College Review*, vol. 52, no. 1 (Winter 1999), p. 22.

⁶ Bowker, "New Management," p. 64.

⁷ Ibid., p. 65.